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# Selected Speeches and News Releases

October 10 - October 16, 1991

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

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## EXOTIC LETTUCES MAY BRIGHTEN FUTURE SALADS, USDA SCIENTISTS REPORT

WASHINGTON, Oct. 10—Tomorrow's salads might feature lettuce with yellow or dark crimson leaves along with different shapes, textures and tastes, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists say.

“Adding surprising colors or shapes to familiar lettuces that grow well in the U.S. could boost the appeal of salads in the future,” said Edward J. Ryder of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Traits like yellow or frilly leaves showed up in a test garden of nearly 400 kinds of lettuce that Ryder and colleague William Waycott grew this summer at the U.S. Agricultural Research Station, Salinas, Calif.

The garden, about half the size of a football field, “displayed 6,000 years of lettuce breeding history,” said Waycott. “Some of the lettuces probably descended from varieties pictured in ancient tombs in Egypt.”

Ryder showed off the experimental garden at the Second National Symposium on New Crops, held recently in Indianapolis. The garden was an “eyeopening array of colors, sizes, shapes and textures,” he said. “Even though I'd already seen each of these lettuces individually, this was the first time I'd ever seen them all together in one field.”

The yellow-leaf lettuce is grown in Hungary, he noted. Another variety, popular in the Middle East, sports blue-green leaves and two-footlong stems that are eaten like celery and taste like a cross between kohlrabi and asparagus, he said.

“Breeders can likely move these unusual traits into familiar iceberg, butterhead or loose-leaf lettuces by using conventional plant-breeding techniques and new approaches of modern biotechnology,” said Ryder.

Other varieties included a type grown in Spain that has unusually dark crimson outer leaves and, from Turkey, a frilly lettuce resembling a pompon. Some boast a deeper, richer green than any of today's supermarket lettuces, he added.

The lettuces, Ryder noted, represent only about 25 percent of the varieties in a permanent collection of lettuce seeds at the Salinas laboratory. He and Waycott intend to plant new test gardens, made up of the remaining varieties, over the next several years.



Waycott said some of the test lettuces have a well-developed root system—a trait he'd like to see into tomorrow's lettuces. "Most of the lettuces grown in the U.S. today," he said, "have usually just a single, narrow taproot with a few thin branches out to the side. But we'd like to breed lettuces that have a bigger, deeply penetrating root structure that fills the soil in all directions, just like the roots we saw on some of the lettuces from Turkey and China.

"An extensive network of roots branching out from a taproot should give the plant a better chance of surviving on less water and fertilizer. That's because the plant has more branch roots to absorb the soil's water and nutrients."

A prolific root system, he added, might also help lettuce cope with salt buildup in the soil and with attacks by root diseases.

Marcia Wood (510) 559-6070

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## **USDA INCREASES FEES FOR SEED INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 10—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will increase fees for inspection and certification of agricultural and vegetable seed quality beginning Nov. 12.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the increase is necessary to cover the cost of testing seed and issuing Federal Seed Analysis Certificates by the agency's Livestock and Seed Division. Increased costs for seed testing supplies, equipment and federal employee salaries are the major reasons for the fee increase.

The fees for testing and issuing certificates will increase from \$23.40 per hour to \$29.40 per hour. The fee for issuing additional duplicate certificates, requested after the original certificate has been issued, will increase from \$3.30 to \$7.35.

USDA conducts the inspection and certification program on a voluntary, fee-for-service basis under the Agricultural Marketing Act. To ensure that the program is self supporting, fees equal to operating costs must be collected.

The proposal will be published as a final rule in the Oct. 11 Federal Register. Copies are available from James P. Triplitt, Chief, Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch, Building 506, BARC-E, Beltsville, Md. 20705.

Rebecca Unkenholz (202) 447-8998

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## USDA PROTECTS 25 NEW PLANT VARIETIES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued certificates of protection to developers of 25 new varieties of seed-reproduced plants including barley, garden bean, corn, lettuce, onion, pea, rape and soybean.

Kenneth H. Evans, with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service said developers of the new varieties will have the exclusive right to reproduce, sell, import, and export their products in the United States for 18 years. Certificates of protection are granted after a review of the breeder's records and claims that each new variety is novel, uniform and stable.

The following varieties have been issued certificates of protection:

—the Pennco variety of barley, developed by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station and the USDA-ARS, University Park, Pa.;

—the Westbred Waxbar, WestBred Sprinter and Winchester varieties of barley, developed by Western Plant Breeders Inc., Bozeman, Mont.;

—the Homestyle and Biscayne varieties of garden bean, developed by the Asgrow Seed Co., Kalamazoo, Mich.;

—the PHJ65, PHK46, PHK56, PHN34, PHP382 PHP76, PHV07, PHW06, PHW51, and PHW86 varieties of corn, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Johnston, Iowa;

—the Winter King variety of lettuce, developed by Bruce Church Inc., Salinas, Calif.;

—the Honcho II variety of lettuce, developed by Genecorp Inc., Salinas, Calif.;

—the Redbone variety of onion, developed by the the Asgrow Seed Co., Kalamazoo, Mich.;

—the Athena variety of pea, developed by W. Brotherton Seed Co. Inc., Moses Lake, Wash.;



—the IMC variety of rape, developed by E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., Wilmington, Del.;

—the 9341, 9411, and 9461 varieties of soybean, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred international Inc., Des Moines, Iowa; and

—the A3322 variety of soybean, developed by the Asgrow Seed Co., Kalamazoo, Mich.

The certificates of protection for the Pennco, Westbred Waxbar, WestBred Sprinter, and cinchester barley varieties and the IMC 129 rape variety are being issued to be sold by variety name only as a class of certified seed, and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owners.

The plant variety protection program is administered by USDA's AMS and provides marketing protection to developers of new and distinctive seedreproduced plants ranging from farm crops to flowers.

Rebecca Unkenholz (202) 447-8998

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## USDA INCREASES PORK ASSESSMENT RATE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will raise the rate for assessing hogs and imported pork to increase funding for the national pork promotion and research program, effective Dec. 1.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the increase—one-tenth of one percent—was endorsed by the National Pork Producers Delegate Body, the group of pork producers which initiates actions affecting the program. The assessments are levied on the market value of live hogs, when sold domestically or imported, and on imported pork and pork products.

The increase would add about \$10 million to \$12 million dollars annually to the pork program's \$30-million budget, allowing the program to keep pace with inflation and fund projects for advancing the position of pork in the marketplace, Haley said.

The pork program is authorized by the 1985 Pork Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act, which is implemented by the 1986 Pork Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Order.

The increase is the first since the initial one-quarter of one-percent assessment rate established in 1986.



Notice of the increase will appear as a final rule in the Oct. 15 Federal Register. Copies and additional information are available from the Marketing Programs Branch, Livestock and Seed Division, AMS, USDA, rm. 2624-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, tele. (202) 382-1115.

Alicia L. Ford (202) 447-8998

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## UNUSUAL TROPICAL CROPS MAY APPEAL TO U.S. SHOPPERS, USDA SCIENTIST REPORTS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11—Two exotic foods from tropical trees—pili nuts and rambutan fruit—may tempt the taste buds of American consumers, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

Pili nut, shaped like an inch-long football, “has a delicate flavor all its own and would be delicious in a party mix with peanuts, cashews, almonds or macadamia nuts,” said Francis T.P. Zee of USDA’s Agricultural Research Service.

And rambutan, a sweet crunchy fruit with long, soft spines of red, yellow or orange, “would easily stand out from more familiar fare in the produce section of your supermarket,” he said. The fruit is oval, about the size of a golf ball.

Some growers and marketers are anxious to introduce specialty crops, like pili nut and fresh rambutan, to mainland markets, Zee said. He is curator of an ARS gene bank in Hilo, Hawaii, that safeguards the nation’s collection of seeds and plants of about a dozen tropical crops.

The gene bank—the National Clonal Repository for Tropical and Subtropical Fruit and Nut Crops—shares cuttings and seeds with breeders worldwide.

Roasted pili nuts have a delicate flavor and a crisp, tender texture—softer than a walnut or peanut. “They make a tasty snack or ingredient in chocolate candies, ice cream or other desserts,” he added. The nut is native to the Philippines, where it’s popular roasted and glazed with brown sugar.

Zee said Pili trees can flourish in the warm climates of Hawaii and possibly Puerto Rico. The trees can pose problems for growers, however, because “it’s hard to successfully graft a pili twig or bud,” noted Zee.

He is working with researchers from the University of Hawaii's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to solve that problem.

As for Rambutan, Zee said it could easily become a favorite because of its colorful and unusual appearance. "A few fresh rambutans in a gift basket," he said, "would make a beautiful present."

Beneath its peel, the egg-shaped rambutan has pearly white, translucent flesh. The fruit's flavor is hard to describe, said Zee, but is usually sweet, pleasant and mild. The crisp, juicy texture is somewhat like that of a grape.

Native to Malaysia and India, rambutan can be eaten fresh by itself or in salads or desserts, or it can be processed for jam and jelly. Thailand markets about \$2.5 million of canned rambutan yearly.

Marcia Wood (510) 559-6070

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## **DOG HANDLER COMBINES HOBBY WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND USDA "SNOOPY" DOGS**

WASHINGTON—The sun has barely risen on a warm fall morning when Sandy Seward leads her dog, Jessie, from the kennel to her government-owned station wagon. "Time to go to work, Jessie," Sandy says as she playfully roughs the beagle's head.

Sandy and her dog are employees of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and members of the Beagle Brigade, teams of dogs and handlers that help inspect baggage of international travelers. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service currently operates 23 Beagle Brigade teams at 13 airports to uncover forbidden produce and meat.

APHIS inspectors work to keep out certain agricultural products because they can carry in exotic plant pests and animal diseases not present in the United States. As a precaution, passengers are asked to list all agricultural souvenirs on their customs declaration.

Sandy and Jessie help make sure travelers don't accidentally (or on purpose) forget to declare something. Using dogs for detection speeds the work because dogs can sniff bags for the scent of contraband without the need to open the luggage.

"I love this work," Sandy says as Jessie gives her a soulful beagle look. "I can be with my dog all day, hone my skills as a trainer—and get paid for it, too. Before I started working for the government, I had



been training dogs for years as a hobby. Finding a good full-time job working with dogs was the realization of a dream.”

Sandy and Jessie have worked together at the Miami International Airport since 1988. When passengers and their baggage enter the international arrival area, Sandy leads her dog briskly through the crowd, and Jessie sniffs the air for the scent of citrus, fruit, mangoes, beef, pork and many other prohibited products.

If Jessie detects something suspicious, he sits down quietly beside the suitcase or package exuding the smell and looks up for a reward. Sandy responds with praise and a couple of tasty dog biscuits. The bag in question is marked to be opened and manually examined by another inspector.

Sandy and Jessie are trained specialists. Sandy spent her first weeks as an APHIS employee learning the basics of how agricultural inspection fits into border control at the airport. Then she entered the Beagle Brigade Training Center in Miami, located on a small research farm about 10 miles from the airport.

At that point, Sandy was matched up with Jessie, who already had been trained to respond to the smell of 10 individual fruits plus beef and pork. The two of them spent six weeks developing their routine and additional time practicing to apply their new skills to the busy environment of an international airport.

Dog and handler have steadily improved their accuracy. By the end of their second year, 9 out of 10 of the bags they identified as suspicious turned out to contain forbidden agricultural products.

Meanwhile, Sandy and Jessie have become a popular attraction. At the airport, travelers often stop to watch them work and to pet Jessie—wearing his distinctive green jacket with the slogan, “Protecting American Agriculture.”

Away from the airport, dog and handler give public presentations to help explain to future travelers why they shouldn’t bring in agricultural contraband. The team gives demonstrations for newspapers, television, travel groups and community organizations—often there are more requests than the team can fill.

To help meet all of these demands, a third member has been added to the team, a young beagle by the name of Charlie. When Jessie, who is over eight years old, gets tired, Charlie fills in—helping the team to double its seizures of contraband.

APHIS managers say Sandy ably demonstrates skills that every handler

needs—to deal effectively with both dogs and people. To expand the Beagle Brigade, APHIS is interested in receiving a resume from other dog trainers who have these basic skills. Applicants should write to: Recruitment and Development; USDA, APHIS; 236 Federal Building; Hyattsville, Md. 20782; or telephone 1 (800) 762-2738.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

Issued: Oct. 15, 1991

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## **X-RAYS HELP BATTLE HISTORIC HESSIAN FLY IN WHEAT**

WASHINGTON—Powerful x-rays are the latest weapon used to prevent damage by the Hessian fly, a pest that has plagued wheat fields for more than two centuries.

J.H. Hatchett, leader of a U.S. Department of Agriculture research team, said the x-rays help make possible the transfer of genes for fly resistance from rye to common wheat. Rye, a distant relative of wheat, is highly resistant to the Hessian fly.

“In recent years, wheat varieties that genetically resist feeding of the Hessian fly larvae have been used to combat the pest,” said Hatchett, an entomologist with USDA’s Agricultural Research Service in Manhattan, Kan.

“However,” he said, “some resistance genes have been in wheat varieties for more than 10 years and are losing their effectiveness because strains of the pest have developed that can overcome the plant’s resistance.”

“But now we feel there’s a possibility that, in the long run, rye genes may be more durable than those in wheat.”

Irradiation, which is the result of x-ray use, already has been used as a tool in transferring greenbug resistance from rye to wheat. In the procedure, irradiation actually “breaks” the chromosomes within pollen from crossbred plants. Located on these chromosome pieces are genes such as the ones responsible for resistance to Hessian fly larvae. The irradiated pollen then is used to fertilize other plants.

“You hope the x-rays will break the wheat chromosomes and rye chromosomes, and then a piece of the rye chromosome carrying the gene for resistance will insert or attach to the wheat chromosome,” Hatchett explained.



In the latest research, ARS scientists crossed resistant Balbo rye and a fly-susceptible common wheat. Chromosomes of their offspring were chemically treated to overcome sterility.

These plants were again crossed with susceptible wheat plants, and the resistant offspring were allowed to self-pollinate. Pollen from the offspring was exposed to a low dosage of radiation and then used to fertilize several lines of wheat.

After several generations of testing and selection, the scientists produced pure resistant wheat lines. According to Hatchett, a genetic “fingerprinting” technique identified the rye chromatin in the wheat plants, and the scientists verified the resistance of the wheat lines by finding dead Hessian fly larvae at the base of the plants.

He said that germplasm of resistant lines, developed jointly by ARS and the Kansas and Oklahoma agricultural experiment stations, will be made available sometime within the next 12 months to both public and private wheat breeders for use in the development of new Hessian fly-resistant wheat varieties.

First identified on Long Island, N.Y., in 1779, the Hessian fly is believed to have been brought to the United States in the straw bedding of Hessian mercenaries hired to fight in the Revolutionary War.

Over time, the fly has spread to all major wheat-growing regions of the United States. Larvae of the insect attack young wheat in the fall and again in the spring, stunting plant growth and causing yield losses of 5 to 10 percent each year.

Marcie Gerrietts (309) 685-4011

Issued: October 15, 1991

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## **SECRETARY MADIGAN CELEBRATES NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—“Look What’s Cooking in School Lunch” was the theme and message of today’s Capitol Hill event hosted by Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan in celebration of National School Lunch Week (Oct. 14-18).

The event showcased a sampling of new nutritious recipes being used in school lunch programs across the country, as well as some innovative local nutrition education programs.

School lunch serves a well-balanced, low-cost meal to 24 million children every day. Of these, 12 million get free and reduced price meals.

“For many of these needy children, school breakfast and lunch provide a significant portion of the nutrients and calories the children get that day,” said Secretary Madigan. “USDA is committed to the continual improvement of school lunch, and is taking a leadership role in working with states and communities across the country to make that happen.”

The school lunch program is a cooperative effort. School districts purchase 80 percent of their food from local retailers, while receiving 20 percent of their commodities from USDA. As part of its role to provide this support, USDA has reduced sugar, salt and fat in the commodity foods it provides. In addition it has provided recipes, nutrient data and other help to encourage school food services to improve the meals they serve. USDA plans to provide recognition to those school districts that demonstrate a high degree of success in improving the quality of the school lunch program.

Among the dishes sampled today were chili made with ground turkey; seafood gumbo and “king cake” offered by Louisiana schools during Mardi Gras; ethnic foods such as chicken tacos; and lasagna prepared using low-fat, low-salt recipes.

Madigan said the school lunch program has increased its emphasis on nutrition education in order to help children, teachers, parents and food service workers better understand the need for a healthful diet. He introduced “Nutrasaurus Rex,” a walking, talking green plush dinosaur from San Bernardino, California, who delivers messages on good nutrition to school children.

Joining Secretary Madigan in hosting the event was the American School Food Service Association (ASFSA), represented by Lib McPherson, president-elect of the organization. ASFSA’s membership is comprised of thousands of food service professionals who work for school systems throughout the country and plan, prepare and serve school lunch every day.

“ASFSA is working hand in hand with USDA to provide meals with high student acceptability that are lower in fat, sugar and sodium, and higher in fiber,” McPherson said.

Also on hand for the event were food service directors from several school districts around the country, who explained how they use shared



ideas and imagination to help them put together nutritious school lunches. The directors included:

Bob Honson, Director of Nutrition Services for the Portland, Oregon, public schools; Tami Cline, Assistant Director of Food Services for the public schools of Boston, Massachusetts; Dorothy Dusenberry, Director of School Nutrition for the DeKalb County, Georgia, school system; Lib McPherson, School Food Service Director for Caswell County, North Carolina; Mary Klatko, Director of Food and Nutrition Service for the Howard County, Maryland, public schools; Annette Bomar, Director of the School and Community Nutrition Division of the Georgia State Department of Education; Dale Conoscenti, Food Service Director for the Barre Town Elementary School in Barre, Vermont; and LaReatha Carpenter, Dietitian and Nutrition Specialist for the San Bernardino, California, public schools.

“These are the people on the front line of the National School Lunch Program,” Madigan said. “If the program is to be successful, these are the people who must make it work every day.”

Phil Shanholtzer (703) 756-3286

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## **POTATO PRODUCERS AND IMPORTERS VOTE TO CONFIRM AMENDMENTS TO POTATO PLAN**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—U.S. potato producers and importers voted in an Aug. 19-Sept. 6 referendum and confirmed an amendment to the National Potato Research and Promotion Plan to assess imported potatoes, potato products and seed potatoes at rates levied on domestic potatoes.

The National Potato Research and Promotion Plan implements the National Potato Research and Promotion Program which has operated since 1971. The amendments confirmed in the referendum reflect provisions in the 1990 Farm Bill.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said that of the valid votes cast, 81 percent of the producers and importers voting favored the provisions in the amended plan. Haley said the other confirmed amendments (in force temporarily since Aug. 14) include up to five importers on the National Potato Promotion Board, the program's administrative body; and eliminate assessment refund provisions in the plan.

Escrow assessments collected since Aug. 14 will revert to the Potato Board.

A simple majority vote was required for confirmation of the amendments.

Rebecca Unkenholz (202) 447-8998

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## **USDA PROPOSES DECLARING MELALEUCA A NOXIOUS WEED**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to declare melaleuca quinquenervia (a non-native tree) a noxious weed under provisions of the Federal Noxious Weed Act. The tree is commonly known as melaleuca, or the broadleaf paper bark tree.

“Once declared noxious, the broadleaf paper bark tree could not be imported into the United States or shipped between states without a permit,” said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine in USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

“The permit certifies that moving the tree would not result in unplanned spread. Federal regulations on noxious weeds would also enable us to cooperate with Florida authorities in managing the broadleaf paper bark tree,” Lee said.

The tree was introduced into Florida from Australia in the early 1900’s and was widely planted during the 1940’s and 1950’s. It was valued for its ability to control erosion, provide natural fences and windbreaks, furnish wood, and serve as an ornamental. Beekeepers also liked the broadleaf paper bark tree because it flowers when few other plants do, thus helping bees overwinter.

The tree now covers about 1.5 million acres in southern Florida, in addition to plantings in California, Hawaii, Louisiana, Texas and Puerto Rico.

The broadleaf paper bark tree has become a problem only in Florida because the climate there encourages it to grow faster and produce more seed than in other locations. The tree out competes native vegetation and already has lowered the water table in southern Florida, resulting in a loss of wetlands.

The problem was examined in two public meetings, on Dec. 14, 1990, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and on Dec. 18 in San Francisco, Calif. The



meeting in Florida was heavily attended, while little interest was shown in California.

APHIS officials believe the tree will continue to be sold as an ornamental in California. Its sale and distribution in Florida is being restricted and control measures are underway principally with newly developed biological control agents.

Notice of the APHIS proposal is being published in the Oct. 17 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Dec. 18. An original and three copies of written comments referring to Docket 91-084 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Doug Hendrix (301) 436-7253

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## **USDA PROPOSES TO PERMIT IMPORTS OF POMELOS FROM ISRAEL**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to permit imports of Israeli pomelos, a specialty citrus fruit related to grapefruit.

“Pomelos have not been permitted entry into the United States because they can carry the larvae of the Mediterranean fruit fly,” said Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine in USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “However, Israel is prepared to subject pomelos to the prescribed cold treatment that kills Medfly larvae. Moreover, Israel’s plant protection service demonstrated that this cold treatment also kills the Oriental red spider mite, which has infested some Israeli citrus.

“We therefore see no reason to continue banning imports of pomelos that have received the cold treatment.”

Lee said Israeli exporters believe there is a U.S. market for about 300 metric tons of pomelos per year. Only a few producers in Florida and California are currently marketing the fruit.

Notice of the proposal will be in the Oct. 17 Federal Register.

Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Nov. 18. An original and three copies of written comments referring to Docket 91-126 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-7799

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## **USDA PROPOSES TO ADD HORSE EXPORT FACILITY AT LAREDO, TEXAS**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to approve the El Primero Equine Export Facility at the Laredo, Texas, airport as an official export facility for horses.

“The El Primero facility has all the space and equipment needed to officially process horses and fully meets our standards” said Lonnie J. King, deputy administrator for veterinary services in USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “The existing export facility at the Laredo border crossing mainly serves cattle moving by truck to Mexico. The new facility will serve only horses-mainly consignments by air to South America.”

The export facility is part of El Primero Training Center, Inc., a privately owned horse training operation. Export services are offered on a commercial basis for consignment through the Laredo airport.

According to King, the El Primero facility will allow APHIS to inspect horses officially and will adequately hold, feed and water them while they are at the port. It has the equipment, cleaning and disinfection facilities, access, disposal, lighting and office facilities required by APHIS standards.

A proposal to add the El Primero export inspection facility to the approved list in the federal regulations will be in the Oct. 17 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Nov. 18. An original and three copies of written comments referring to Docket Number 91-099 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected as

soon as received at USDA, Rm 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17—Telephone numbers at the U.S. Department of Agriculture are changing as part of a conversion to a new telephone system for all federal government offices.

Numbers for USDA's Office of Public Affairs will change on Monday, Oct. 28. For most numbers, the area code and last four digits will remain the same; only the exchange numbers will be different.

To assist you, we are providing the new numbers for key contacts in the OPA Director's Office and Office of Press and Media Relations:

Roger Runningen, Director and Press Secretary	(202) 720-4623
Cameron Bruemmer, Deputy Director	(202) 720-6307
Eric Ruff, Director, Press and Media Relations	(202) 720-6850
News Division (Dave Warren, Chief)	(202) 720-4026
News Release Distribution	(202) 720-9120
Ag NewsFAX	(202) 690-3944
Radio-TV Division (Vic Powell, Chief)	(202) 720-4330
Broadcast Media Liaison	(202) 720-6445

Dave Warren (202) 447-4026

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